

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Ivan Allen College Founder's Day Luncheon
Honoring President Jimmy Carter
March 22, 2002

The legacy of Mayor Ivan Allen provides a strong and rich setting for our recognition of President Carter. Both are alumni of Georgia Tech, and we are very proud that this university provided a testing ground for the development of their leadership. In turn, both of them have been absolutely crucial in building a society that has enabled an institution such as Georgia Tech to grow.

My own sense of kinship with Jimmy Carter is based in the common roots we share. We were both born in rural South Georgia, and tell similar stories about our experiences coming to the big city of Atlanta to study at Georgia Tech.

President Carter transferred from Georgia Tech to the Naval Academy to complete his bachelor's degree, and he was rising up through the ranks in a very promising naval career when his father died. He resigned his commission and returned to Plains, Georgia, to run the family peanut business and to launch a new career, this time in politics, by getting elected to the Sumter County School Board. He pursued this career to the State Senate, then the governorship of Georgia, before being elected President of the United States in 1980.

His accomplishments as President were so significant that they still form a frame of reference for the daily news of today. Reporters covering the Middle East hark back to the Camp David Accords and the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, which Jimmy Carter negotiated. We still hear references to the Panama Canal Treaty, the Salt-II treaty with the Soviet Union, and the establishment of diplomatic relations with China – all of them achievements of the Carter administration.

However, when history looks back at Jimmy Carter's life, I expect he will be remembered and lauded as much if not more for his accomplishments after leaving the White House as for his presidency. Rather than retire to a life of playing golf and charging huge speaking fees, he has continued a career of international diplomacy that has won him tremendous respect all around the world.

Instead of a static repository for documents, his version of the presidential library is the Carter Center, which has been waging peace, fighting disease, promoting democracy, and building hope around the world for almost 20 years. And Jimmy Carter himself continues to put his words to work by pounding nails as a frequent volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.

He has written 16 books since leaving office, beginning with his memoirs as President and covering topics as diverse as public policy, aging, his religious faith, poetry, and even a children's book illustrated by his daughter Amy.

He continues to speak out on the issues of our time with wisdom and a firmly rooted moral compass, and his words call us to think – at times to think hard – about the world and our own responsibility to help make it a better place. President Carter’s leadership has been important for us all and it is an honor for all of us to have him with us today and to recognize his lifetime of service and achievement by awarding him the 2002 Ivan Allen Award for Progress and Service. At this time I would like to ask Dean Sue Rosser and President Carter to join me here at the podium.